



THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

**Department of Public Safety**

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February 8, 2018

The Honorable Paul Seaton  
Co-Chair, House Finance Committee  
Alaska State Legislature  
State Capitol Room 505  
Juneau, AK 99801

The Honorable Neal Foster  
Co-Chair, House Finance Committee  
Alaska State Legislature  
State Capitol Room 410  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Co-Chair Seaton and Co-Chair Foster,

Thank you for the opportunity to present the Department of Public Safety's (DPS) FY2019 budget overview to the House Finance Committee on January 30, 2018. This letter provides responses to the questions asked by committee members during that meeting.

**Regarding the Alaska Wing Civil Air Patrol (CAP) allocation, Representative Grenn asked what the \$453.5 UGF appropriation represents as a percentage of the CAP's total budget.**

As stated during the department's testimony, the entire amount of funding appropriated to DPS under AS 18.60.146 (currently \$453.5) is passed through to the Alaska Wing Civil Air Patrol. Per their website, the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) is the official auxiliary of the United States Air Force and a 501 (c)3 non-profit organization. They have three primary missions: aerospace education, cadet programs, and emergency services. <http://www.akwg.cap.gov/home>.

The Commander of the Alaska Wing CAP, Col. Carl L. Brown Jr., confirmed that their total annual budget is comprised of the state funding they receive through DPS and a small amount (\$3.5) related to a rebate from Maxwell Air Force Base of the membership dues. The Alaska Wing CAP is fully dependent on the state funding received through DPS to provide the services they do in the areas of youth, emergency services, and aerospace education.

**Representative Grenn asked for the total number of people trained through the Public Safety Training Academy during a year.**

The total number of individuals who successfully completed training through the Public Safety Training Academy are as follows: 118 in 2014; 89 in 2015; 82 in 2016; and 104 in 2017. This is an average of 98 persons from various agencies trained annually.

Some of the training courses provided include the 15-week Alaska Law Enforcement Training Academy (ALET),<sup>1</sup> Alaska Police Standards Council (APSC) recertification training, Active Shooter training, Firearms and Firearms Instructor training, and VPSO Fire and Emergency Trauma Technician (ETT) training.

**Co-Chair Seaton asked whether funding through the Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) program could be used for recruiting, and what mechanisms the department is looking at to improve the flexibility in addressing the roadblocks to filling VPSO positions.**

There are no specific prohibitions in the applicable Alaska Statutes or Administrative Regulations against using VPSO funding for recruiting or recruitment activities. *See AS 18.65.670 and 13 AAC 96.* In fact, DPS has recently authorized unallocated funding not used for hiring of VPSO's be made available to grantees for use in recruitment efforts. Additionally, DPS plans to embed a VPSO in the DPS recruitment unit to increase VPSO program-wide recruitment efforts in partnership with DPS/AST.

The department continues to work closely with the ten VPSO program grantee agencies to identify ways to improve and expand the program. Recruitment and retention of VPSO positions is a chief concern and is fundamental to both ensuring a fully operational program and to expanding the program to benefit additional rural areas. The grantee agencies have suggested ideas as to how recruitment and retention of VPSO's can be improved ranging from increasing VPSO salaries, to providing more training, to authorizing geographic differentials, to providing funding for costs that currently are the responsibility of local villages such as telephone and office space. The department will continue to work with its grantee partners to identify and implement solutions.

**Representative Thompson asked, given the number of trooper vacancies, what is happening with the vehicles that would normally be assigned to those positions?**

DPS strives to maintain a right-sized vehicle fleet. The department employs a vehicle coordinator who is responsible for maintaining an inventory of all assigned vehicles showing their locations and the equipment installed in each vehicle. Additionally, Detachment Commanders are responsible for

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<sup>1</sup> Troopers attend an additional three weeks of training beyond the 15 weeks included in the basic ALET.

maintaining an inventory of all vehicles assigned to the Detachment/Bureau and a log showing where and to whom each vehicle is assigned and advising the vehicle coordinator of any changes in the status of vehicles assigned to the Detachment/Bureau.

When a position becomes vacant, the vehicle assigned to that position is reserved to ensure the vehicle is available when the position becomes filled. Currently there are 43 vacant trooper positions and 37 reserved vehicles (there is not necessarily a one-to-one ratio of troopers to vehicles). Mileage information on each vehicle is reported quarterly and is used to obtain overall usage for each vehicle so they can be rotated accordingly. Vehicles may be rotated within a Detachment or are sometimes traded between Detachments to ensure appropriate usage.

**Representative Guttenberg asked whether VPSO grantees were prohibited from using unexpended or lapse grant funding on anything other than personal services.**

Legislative intent language in the FY2018 operating budget provides that the monies appropriated for the VPSO program are for the sole purpose of hiring, training, and supporting current or future VPSO's and that unexpended monies shall be returned to the general fund.<sup>2</sup>

The department strives to allow flexibility while also ensuring good stewardship of appropriated funds by following best grants management practices. Grantees may request amendments to their budgets based on anticipated lapse funds, provided the request is in conformance with the legislative intent language. The VPSO Program Office within DPS carefully reviews all budget amendment requests received from grantee agencies and approvals are based on the justified and demonstrated need to support current or future VPSO's.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these responses. Please let me know if I can provide further information

Sincerely,



Walt Monegan  
Commissioner

cc: Torrey Jacobson, Program Budget Analyst IV, Governor's Office of Management and Budget  
Amanda Ryder, Fiscal Analyst, Legislative Finance Division  
Kelly Howell, Administrative Services Director, DPS  
Allison Hanzawa, Special Assistant to the Commissioner II, DPS

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<sup>2</sup> Ch. 1 SSSLA 17, Sec. 1, Page 29, Lines 8 – 10.